

Our Bishop's Seasonal Message



"If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation: the old has passed away; behold the new has come."

In the midst of Lent, as we wind down the path to Jesus' crucifixion, sometimes it is difficult to hear any positive message, especially a word which seems so distant, so remote, so impossible even to imagine. The newspapers are full of death and destruction, from wars and earthquakes, and more recently floods. All around us is evidence of not only no new creation, but of worsening old creation. Brokenness abounds.

And yet, God calls us in the still small voice, call us into the quiet place where, if we are attentive we may hear that, in fact, God still reigns. The dreary days of Lent will soon give rise to the Alleluias of Easter morning. We will once again be faced with the humanly impossible fact of the Resurrection of the Son of God. But Resurrection is not just about Jesus. As both St. Paul and the author of Apocalypse rehearse, God is making all creation new, and that includes you and me. We who do not deserve the grace, mercy, and love of the Creator of all have received in greater abundance than we can begin to imagine, more and more of the life of our God and Savior today. Abundant life is not reserved for the future, for the sweet bye and bye; it begins today and grows with each passing moment. We are the new creation that has been promised, we are being made new.

As I travel around the Diocese of Fort Worth and listen to the stories of resurrection and new beginnings, I am moved, often to tears, with the life of Christ Jesus being shown forth by faithful Episcopalians in the middle of broken hearts, broken relationships, broken dreams. God, on the other hand, has replaced those broken hearts, relationships, broken dreams with God's own new life, with possibilities that might not even been imaginable even a few short months ago. God is doing a new work in our midst and using us, all of us, to show forth the joy and peace that comes from God alone—the peace which does indeed pass understanding.

As we continue the walk toward Calvary, I want to quote a sermon I saw/heard some years ago. A wonderful black preacher was exhorting his congregation to stand faithful in spite of turmoil and tribulation. He said, "It is Good Friday, but Easter's coming." It is a refrain that we must keep ever before our eyes. Easter is coming, resurrection is about to happen, new life is being born in our presence. Can you see it coming? Will you proclaim it by word and deed?

May your Holy Week be blessed with a deeper understanding of all that God has given in our order for us to become God's new creatures.

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